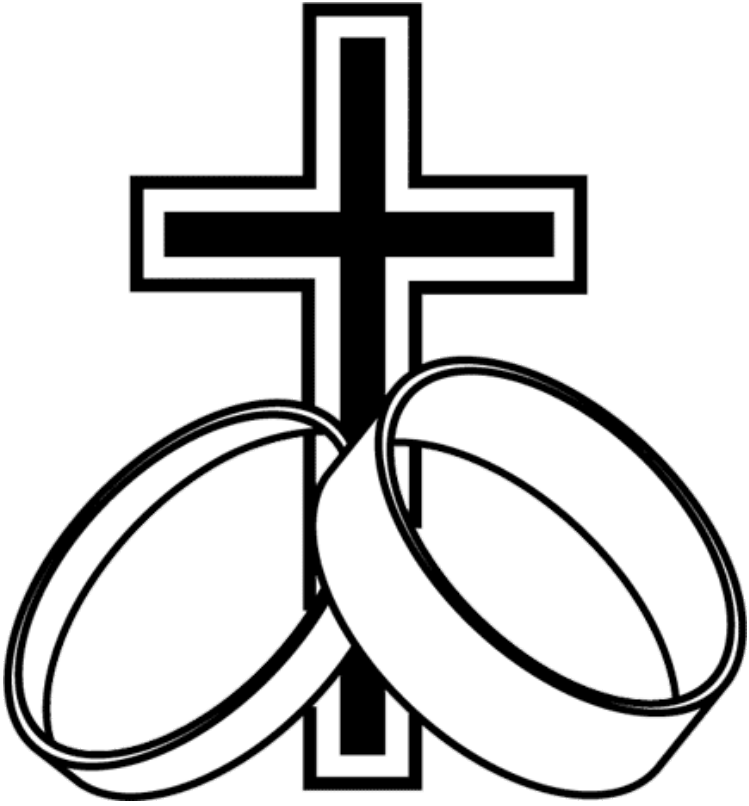


Trinity Parish Church



Christian Marriage
in the Episcopal Church

What is Christian Marriage in the Episcopal Church?

Christian marriage is the sacramental rite of the church in which a wedded couple "enter into a life-long union, make their vows before God and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill their vows" (Book of Common Prayer [BCP], p. 861).

This union is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, if it is God's will, for the raising and nurturing of children in the knowledge and love of the Lord (BCP, p. 423).

At the Declaration of Consent, both persons promise to love, comfort, honor, and keep their spouse, in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all others, to be faithful to them as long as they both live (BCP, p. 424).

The congregation witnesses the couple's promises, and the members of the congregation promise to do all in their power to uphold them in their marriage.

At the Marriage, the couple may pledge their lives to each other by the giving and receiving of rings as symbols of their vows. When desired, other appropriate symbols of their vows may be used instead of rings.

Can we get married at Trinity Parish Church?

Any Christian couple wishing to be married at Trinity Parish Church are warmly welcomed to speak to the priest about arrangements. As marriage in the Episcopal Church is a holy Sacrament, the couple would be married by the priest of Trinity Parish Church.

“Can we get married next week?!”

Great enthusiasm! However, marriages in the Episcopal Church are very important occasions and they require much preparation and thought. The couple will need to fulfill premarital counseling with the priest in the lead-up to the marriage ceremony, with an absolute minimum of 4 sessions.

Because of the requirement of premarital counseling and the appropriate planning required, any couple wishing to be married must have their initial meeting with the priest a minimum of 30 days prior to the proposed date of the marriage.

What does the wedding ceremony look like?

Any wedding at Trinity Parish Church will be celebrated in the manner given in our main worship book, the Book of Common Prayer (BCP). If you wish to see what a marriage ceremony looks like, consult either a physical copy or take a look at the online version at bcponline.org.

If you are unfamiliar with the Book of Common Prayer, don't worry! If the couple do choose to be married at Trinity Parish Church, the priest and couple will finalize the contents of the service at least 7 days prior to the marriage ceremony.

Where can we get married?

Due to the importance of the wedding ceremony, it is highly encouraged that the marriage take place at Trinity Parish Church. If it is desired for the marriage ceremony to happen at a different location, please consult with the priest about potential arrangements.

How much is all of this going to cost?

The Sacrament of Marriage is a holy occasion, but it also requires a lot of planning and work, not only by the couple but also by the clergy and staff at Trinity Parish.

Members at Trinity Parish Church may arrange the ceremony and building use at no cost (with the exception of the organist's fee, if music is provided).

All marriage ceremonies that make use of the music of the parish will need to consult with the priest and the organist for appropriate music. Please consult the office for the organist's wedding fee.

Any non-members of the Episcopal Church desiring marriage at Trinity are asked to give a suggested donation of 10% of the wedding's total cost to cover the full use of the buildings for the ceremony and any receptions that are planned for the occasion.

A note about 10% giving: The parish trusts that the couple and families involved will be honest with their donation. We never ask to audit any budget for any wedding. We simply expect the parties to give appropriately for the ministry of our parish.

How do we start the conversation about marriage at Trinity?

Please reach out to our office:

- Email: trinityepiscopalsearcy@gmail.com.
- Phone: 501-268-5270

Basic Marriage Checklist

- o Notify Trinity Parish Church a minimum of 30 days prior of the couple's desire for marriage.
- o Have the initial meeting with the priest and finalize the timeline and date for marriage ceremony.
- o Couple will begin to go through premarital counseling with the priest.
- o The wedding ceremony will be planned between the couple and the priest and finalized at least 7 days prior to the wedding ceremony.
- o The couple will need to bring a valid marriage certificate from the State of Arkansas to be given to the priest at some point prior to the marriage ceremony. If the priest does not have the certificate, the marriage cannot be solemnized.
- o The Wedding Rehearsal is normally held in the evening prior to the day of the wedding ceremony. All members of the wedding party (bridesmaids, groomsmen, immediate family, participating children, etc.) will be expected to be present. The priest will be in charge of leading the rehearsal.